by sons other than the first reinforces this, although there are examples of branch families being established in villages away from the parental home. This intermarriage among kinship groups and the settlement of first sons and other children in the same village brings about a situation in which blood relatives or relatives by marriage are exceedingly numerous. It gives to village life cohesion and solidarity. This was very noticeable in the villages studied. Specific illustrations later will show the influences of these situations on many phases of village life. 621

It is no wonder then that the family system has a strong influence on community organization and on formal government. The semi-official organizations such as the neighborhood groups (han in Japanese), the young men's association (seinendan in Japanese), and the women's association (fujinkai in Japanese) are made up of blocs of relatives, friends, and neighbors. These circumstances blur the distinctions between the private and the public life of the family. The same is true of village government and probably accounts in large measure for democratic village government. At a wedding, at a funeral, at a birthday celebration for a child, the head of the village (kuchō in Japanese), and often the mayor of the township (sonchō in Japanese) will be present, not for political or vote catching reasons, but because he is a relative, by blood or marriage, or a personal friend of his hosts. This theme will be developed later, but it should be pointed out here that the family system, in its contemporary operations, is not only the mould for shaping the outlines of obligations and responsibilities for individuals, but that it is an important guiding principle in the conduct of community life and of formal government. 602 621 [595] [622]

2

Kinship Terminology and the Kinship System

We can now explore in more detail the mechanisms by which the family system operates. To do this, it will be well first to list the common kinship and related terms. These are the terms most often met with in conversation and which appear in the family registers (koseki in Japanese). Kinship terminology follows the Japanese practice. Like Western usage, many terms such as grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece refer to relatives both on the paternal and the maternal side. The chief differences lie in the rank order in which sons or daughters of a family are designated. A child ordinarily is not referred to as a son or as a daughter but as a first or second son, or a third daughter, or whatever the case may be. The most common terms, with their Japanese equivalents are listed below. The first word is the honorific term and the word in parentheses is the equivalent but less polite form. In general, the honorific is used in speaking of another's relatives, or in speaking to one older than oneself. The less polite term refers to one's own family or is used in speaking to persons younger than one's self. 601 [217]

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

conduct of a local business of any size, employment in official and semi-official organizations, and teaching require facility in reading and writing Japanese, that is, the use of the Chinese character and the two Japanese syllabaries, katakana and hiragana. It is true that under the Japanese and the present system of education, everyone learns the characters. But after school is left behind, there must be continued practice in reading and writing, or one's fund of knowledge gradually disappears and he remembers only a few of the simpler or more common characters. For responsible leadership, this school vocabulary must at least be maintained. A village headman today must hold his own in reading and writing. Reports have to be made to the township office. The frequent conferences and meetings require note taking. Storm warnings may be received, correspondence and simple record keeping are continual tasks. In one village, the criticism made of the headman was that his knowledge of characters was too elementary.

If a person has leisure, this makes him available for positions of leadership. A poor farmer could not ordinarily accept the position of village headman except at a great sacrifice. Public duties, even in a small village like Hanashiro, require that a headman be on call most of the time for meetings, or to hear personal problems and complaints of the villagers. It is significant that the former village headman of Hanashiro and the current headman of Matsuda both are operators of rice mills and do not have the exacting dawn to dusk duties of a farmer. In Hanashiro and Nagamo, the present headmen are operating farmers who are able to combine their private and public duties, but both places are small. The headman of Minatogawa, a fisherman, has had to forego many fishing trips because his duties kept him in the village.

Leadership is also assumed by those who have had foreign experience, either in the Japanese administrative hierarchy abroad or simply through foreign residence. These people generally have a broader point of view and know more.

The last factor is age. It is often thought that village life in Oriental countries under the family system is dominated by the older and respected males. It is true that the opinion of retired elders is sought for and respected, but not merely because of age. In addition, there may be a life of successful farming, teaching, office holding, possibly a combination of these, behind them. Leadership comes from young men too, usually the result of experience in the young men's association. Energetic leadership, often accompanied by organizational ability, is noticeable in the age group from about 24 to 27. Women have fewer opportunities but can show their abilities in their work in the Women's Association.

Village leadership rests both on the respected elders and the promising young men, on those who have kept and increased their skill in language, who have occupations that relieve them from the unremitting

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

HANS

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Hanashiro 5
Hinatogawa 9
Matsuda 16

6

The Democratic Government of the Township and Village

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The description of local government has intentionally been delayed to this point because its operation and functions can be seen to greater advantage after an acquaintance with family life and the various forms of group activity. We can see it, not so much a formal structure to be described in legalistic terms, but as an expression of many of the characteristics of the culture we have already found in the family system, group activity, and individual leadership.

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Okinawa and the various smaller islands of the Central Ryukyus (Okinawa-gunto) is one of the four main political subdivisions of the chain. The gunto is divided into townships, and within each township, there are several settlements (buraku, ku, aza) which we have consistently called villages. Township government is the channel for the enforcement of laws and regulations from higher governmental agencies and the source of local measures which govern the several villages of the township.

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The seat of the township government is one of the villages of the township.[4] In Gushichan township, the village office (yakuba) is at Gushichan village, while in Ginoza township, the office is in Ginoza village.

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[577]

At the head of this government is a mayor (sonchō) elected for a four year term. There is no strenuous campaigning for the office. Friends may induce a well known man to run, then visit the villages, and ask the people to vote for him. A reputation for being kind, fair, and refined (otonashii) goes far in electing a man. Once in office he is extremely busy, and like the village headman, usually looks forward to the end of his term rather than to re-election. A new mayor appoints his own or reappoints the old staff. He chooses a vice-mayor (jōyaku) with the approval of the village assembly (gikai).

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A township office generally has the following administrative sections: (1) a treasury and disbursing office (shūnyūyaku), (2) a general affairs (shomu) sections. The head of this section is in charge of the family registers (koseki) and of the registry of seals. These two important functions require a little elaboration.

4 The government actually described here is that of Gushichan township. It did not seem worthwhile to repeat essentially the same information for Ginoza and then to make minute comparisons and contrasts between them.

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592 The family register is a basic official document recording officially all the family data for each household. These have been compiled since the war. The old registers which gave the family history in great and accurate detail were destroyed as a consequence of the war or intentionally by the Japanese. The standard form for the register contains (1) the place of permanent domicile of the family head (honseki), (2) the place of present residence (genjūshō), (3) the name of the previous head of the family (zenkonushi), (4) the head of the family (koshu), his birthdate, and his relationship to the preceding head, (5) the name of the father and mother of the present head, (6) the name of the wife, her birthdate, whether she is a first or succeeding daughter, the names of her parents, (7) the date of the marriage, (8) names of each family member with birthdate and relationship to the head. All matters pertaining to the family are recorded in one place. The register contains information about births, deaths, marriages, and additions, deletions, or notations as to foreign residence. If a second son establishes a branch family, a line is drawn through his name on the register and a notation refers to a new sheet set up for his family. Deaths are shown by drawing a red line through the name.

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213 The registry of seals (inkanbō) is a list of the seals of everyone in the township. The individual stamps his seal in the registry himself. The registry shows the date on which the seal is registered, the present address, permanent address, and the name and birthdate of its owner. Seals (han) are used whenever a signature would be required here. When used they are pressed into an India ink paste and stamped on the document requiring the seal.

632 Following general affairs, there is (3) the tax collection (saisei) (4) school affairs (kōmu), (5) a section devoted to agriculture, industry, fishing, or other important occupations in the township (sangyō), (6) health and sanitation (eisei) concerned with community sanitation, health and vital statistics, and (7) a relief and welfare section (shakaijigyō) which administers relief to the indigent.

[423] The village office also issues to each landowner a certificate of ownership (shoyūkenshōmeisho) with the seal of the mayor for each parcel a villager owns. These sheets, a separate one for each parcel, are bound up in a small book.

[627] The mayor and his staff hear complaints from individual taxpayers regarding assessments, the amount of the tax, or the classification of land. The atmosphere of a township office is friendly and informal. Callers bow on entering. The mayor is readily accessible. (In my experience, mayors and headmen are very high types of individuals). Most members of the staff bring their own lunches. Each office has a young girl or boy to serve tea and to watch the fire.

The legislative functions of township government are performed by an assembly (gikai), whose members, elected at large, enact ordinances and approve the mayor's appointment of a vice mayor. The mayor, his administrative staff, and the township assembly administer the township.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

Their acts are enforced in each of the villages by the headman. 632 622

The village headman (kuchō) is an intermediary between the people and the township government. He listens to complaints from his people, carries them to the township government for a hearing, and has supervision over official community projects and activities. The headman, like the mayor, is a busy, hardworking man. His pay, insufficient to live on, is midway between a salary and an honorarium. The headman of Hanashiro, for example, received ¥720 per month, Hinatogawa ¥950, and Matsuda ¥2000 a month.[5] The headman usually has a paid clerk (shoki) who works full time and may receive more pay than the headman. The clerk compiles reports of the village population, assists the headman at meetings, and is a general administrative assistant. 622 [965] [624]

The village headman is elected for a period of one year. There is no campaigning. The election generally is preceded by discussions among the heads of households, village elders, the young men's association and the women's association. These discussions reveal the candidates who are able to do the work and have the leisure and the money to undertake the responsibility. [66]

A village headman usually leads a harried life. Most of them regard their term as a duty to be discharged rather than a beginning of a career in office holding. A former village headman of Hanashiro said that, in addition to the formal meetings he attended at the township office, he had to visit the village office at least 15 times a month on some village problem, such as taxes, health and sanitation, or individual complaints. The village headman of Hinatogawa had a constant succession of problems: reports on overdue fishermen, getting water pipe lines from the mountains to the water tank repaired, taking charge of typhoon damage repair, and trying to have small improvements made in the village. The headman is caught between the township officials who need tax money and the villagers who complain that they have so little money with which to pay them. In Matsuda, there was the same multiplication of problems involving taxes, need for extra school supplies or repairs, and road maintenance. [651]

Village headmen belong to no special age group. In one township, they ranged in age from 30 to 52. Age is not a decisive factor in their selection, but reputation, literacy, and friendliness are. Though there is a change in administration each year, the incumbent headman stays on one month after the close of his term until the new one has become accustomed to his duties. In some villages, the clerk is elected at the same time as the village headman. [624]

The village headman does not have, nor does he desire, complete responsibility for administering the village. Two groups are available for advice. The headman will not make decisions on important non-routine matters without consulting them. The first of these, the village council 623

5 For comparative purposes, the minimum wage for young Okinawan girls employed as maids for US personnel was about ¥100 ($9.17) per month. [465]

623 (hyōgiin) is an elected body, while the other, composed of village elders and public spirited men (yūshi) is a more honorary group. Sometimes the council is composed of one man from each neighborhood association. The elders are an unofficial body which because of its prestige is consulted when the headman and the council have an emergency problem and wish to get the advice of the respected men of the village. [554] This group is composed of former village headmen, former members of the village council, and well-known residents, such as retired school teachers or farmers.

The village council, composed of about 10 men, is elected from the male heads of a household. Before the war, members were elder men, but they now include young men as well. The council advises the headman on matters for which he is reluctant to assume full responsibility. If the decision is important enough, the village assembly, composed of all the heads of families over 18 years of age, is consulted. A headman may use the village council to help in defending himself against unpopular decisions. The village headman and the council generally make the final decision on village matters, but any decision involving the expenditure of money is referred to the assembly of household heads.

621 623 622 Village government is democratic. The people know their elected leaders personally. The problems with which the people and their officials are concerned are concrete, and seldom matters of abstract principle. They usually are concerned with local improvements, taxation, and schooling. The people participate in local government through the village assembly, at which they elect the headman and the council members. They can criticize and question decisions and approve proposals for spending money.

A headman can conceal neither his strong points nor his faults. Village government utilizes the principle of group responsibility without sacrificing the principle of individual leadership and a strong respected headman can do much to prevent the formation of cliques within a village. This does not mean that individual antagonisms and differences of opinion do not exist, but they seem to be resolved before they reach the stage of organized opposition.

Village government is not an extension of the family system. The village headman is not the head of one large family. But there is individual leadership, consultation and discussion, and mutual agreement both in the family system and in village government. Family experience has both a private and a public character. The public influences of family life takes the form of tempering the formality and mechanics of government.

621 591 A village is composed of single families. Many have intermarried. All of these families have a certain relationship to one another. They may be friends; they may live in the same neighborhood. Their children are known to one another as classmates, later as members of youth organizations. The families may have other associations, based on a common economic interest in agriculture, fishing, or pig raising. They

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

for keeping the population registry, with vital statistics and relevant information on all township residents.* The Welfare Department investigates relief cases and receives applications for support from the poorest families. The Health and Sanitation Administration is primarily concerned with preventive work. Representatives from these five departments are supposed to visit all the villages in the township frequently to inspect and to discuss regulations. The officials and personnel of the five departments are drawn equally from all the villages and commute daily by foot, bicycle, or bus.

The township administration links the central government and individual villages. Numerous requests for central government aid, originating in each community, are sent through the township office. The government in turn deals with each community through the township administration. Contact between township and the villages is maintained by weekly meetings of all village headmen with the mayor and his staff. The village headman is responsible for carrying out township and central government ordinances.

THE VILLAGE

The village headman is elected once a year, in June, from a slate agreed on beforehand during informal discussions by villagers. There is no campaigning; in fact, the elections are treated more as a necessity than a politically important event, and neither before nor after do they incite much public discussion. This democratic process of elections is of post-World War II date. Before the war, the council of village leaders accepted a new headman only if the choice pleased them, so that the headman at that time was virtually appointed. Villagers remarked that "listening to public opinion is a recent change."

The village is still experimenting with the mechanics of a free election. Votes are still restricted to household heads, but the Taira Women's Association and Young People's Association tried to change this in 1955. Although they did not succeed, a concession was made by permitting "representatives" to vote for their household in the absence of a household head, provided the voter was 20 years of age. The elec-

* The old registry was totally destroyed during the war. A new one is being prepared with the help of the people. It no longer differentiates between persons of noble and common descent. Information on crimes committed by people, sentences passed by courts, and other information, such as diseases in the family, like mental illness, is also omitted now.

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

666 tion itself is arranged and supervised by an *ad hoc* committee. In 1955 written ballots were cast and counted immediately so that the result was known within a few minutes after the last ballot was in.

622 In contrast to a position in the township administration, which carries high status, equivalent to that of a teacher, the village headman's job is considered a community service and carries little prestige. This does not mean that the headman should not be an individual of high qualities. He must be at least 25 years old; he has to have sufficient education, especially knowledge of Japanese writing characters, to read government documents and to do the required clerical work; he has to be a good accountant and must be proficient in working with the abacus, since all tax collections are supervised by him; he must be community minded and able to enforce regulations in a friendly but efficient way. The rewards are small, the salary less than that of most township officials. The office is held most frequently by young men who have not been out of high school too long. Most recent headmen are between 25 and 30 years of age. Serving in this office may mark the beginning of an administrative career, either in the township office, in the village store, or in business outside Taira. The clerk, appointed 624 by the headmen to assist in village administration, is also a young man. He too is likely to be headed toward an administrative career.

621 Each village is subdivided into wards, set up originally by Japanese administration to effect greater control over families through the 624 warden. He is a subagent of the headman, and at present he functions [203] mainly as a channel for communications, a useful function in a village like Taira, which covers a large geographical area. Regulations, village meetings, and special events are announced through the warden, and he is often called on to collect delinquent taxes. However, he has little authority and functions more as a neighbor who takes care of necessary contacts between residents and the village administration. Ward members elect him to his honorary office for a one-year term.

623 Village affairs are discussed and legislative action concerning the village initiated by the village council. This group is now partly elected, partly composed of holders of essential offices, such as heads of associations, members of the township assembly, and township officials who live in Taira. The 26 members of the Council are responsible for measures affecting the community, and the headman relies heavily on their advice. Most councilmen are middle aged; few are over 50 years [575] old. Since the head of the Women's Association and the nurse are members, there are at least two female representatives. The youngest councilman is usually the head of the Young People's Association.

623 It is apparent that leadership in the community is always exercised
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2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

by a limited group. The council represents almost all potential leaders. Education and experience in the outside world are the most important qualifications. This is a change from the old days when wealth was also an important factor. An example of a member of township assembly and village council is the man who lived for many years in Brazil (see Chapter 1, p. 374). His leadership is widely recognized and partly due to his successful use of modern farming techniques. Another village leader is a graduate of an agricultural high school, a man of superior intelligence and qualifications who ranked high in an island-wide civil service examination. Another former headman, and now a council member, was born and raised in Japan of Okinawan parents. Although unfamiliar with local dialect and practices, he is well versed in things Japanese and is a financial expert.

The full village council seldom meets. Instead, local matters are discussed among a core of its most active leaders. Noncouncil members, such as the postmaster, policeman, or teachers, may be invited to some meetings. A discussion may start because several villagers want to set aside a special day during which nobody is permitted to go to the mountains to cut firewood, so that more work can be done in the fields. Such a proposal, if approved by the committee of council members, need not be brought before the entire council. Since no formal vote is taken by the council as a rule, friendly discussions decide the issue. Such a decision is then taken directly to a meeting of registered household heads which is held monthly or whenever there are a number of matters to be discussed and voted on. They are presented point by point, first by the headman, next by one or more council members; then discussion is opened to the whole meeting and eventually a vote is taken. This is done in a very relaxed manner and without actually counting the votes, since discussions have continued until there is a general consensus in the group.

Minor matters of immediate importance, such as tax collections, plans for celebrating a holiday, or maintenance work on roads and ditches in parts of the village, are taken up between the headman and wardens in weekly meetings.

The household head meeting is attended by many women who are either registered household heads or have been sent by their husbands or fathers as representatives. Some men may actually be unable to attend; others are disinterested. Failure to send any family representative over 18 years old to a village meeting results in a fine of 20 yen. At one meeting when it seemed as if more women than men were present, the headman joked, "Let's call it a Women's Association Meeting." The women answered, "We are just nice to our husbands, so we

625 went out for fugitives from the south, he would accompany the police-
[632] man or investigate himself. In cases of death, both he and the police-
[647] man have to make a report.

The Young People's Association may serve as a vigilante in emer-
[575] gencies such as fires, floods, tornadoes, and other disasters. When a
[731] military jeep was reported to have been stolen near Naha and driven on the dead-end road running north, the young people in all villages on the way erected road blocks and were ready to help catch the thief. The group would act together in a similar fashion at any threat from outsiders.

● 622 The headman can only enforce local ordinances insofar as he is
681 able to persuade people to comply. He is not concerned directly with
[625] crime or disturbance of the peace. Exceptions are such matters as steal-ing sugar cane or letting chickens run loose so that they enter every yard. For such acts, money fines can be imposed. One warden still has a tag which used to be given to the man whose chickens ran around freely. The offender had to pay the fine and keep the tag until he detected someone else's chicken running loose. Then he could pass the
[626] tag on to that person. Such measures are no longer used. But the underlying principle of public censure and fear of ridicule continues to operate in village social control.

623 Public censure is used along with fines to ensure attendance at vil-
626 lage meetings. Roll call is taken before each meeting so that the ab-
[681] sence of individuals is made known to the whole group. Similarly, when tax collections became more and more delinquent, it was decided to have ward meetings in which everybody would be reminded in public to pay his share. Those who were unable to do so would have to state their reasons. As soon as this new plan was announced, several people got up during the meeting to pay outstanding amounts to the head-
872 man. The school uses similar devices to achieve better attendance and scholarship. During home visit week, about once a year, a meeting is held for all parents and the statistics for attendance for each village are read as well as scholastic performances for each community.

INFORMAL CONTROL

156
626 What other people might think is uppermost on everybody's mind.
[867] Children are reminded by their mothers not to play alone lest people would think they are unpopular. They are told not to fight lest others think badly of them or make them responsible for the consequences. Censure by gossip is common, but criticism is seldom made directly to a person's face, and the target of extensive gossip is often unaware of it.

632 423 [651] The Land Affairs Department maintains the land ownership records ('tochi daichō') and issues certificates of land title ('chiken'). The head of this department ('tochijimuchō' or 'tochi gakari') together with the village mayor ('kuchō') and his council assesses land values for tax purposes.

632 744 The Departments of Public Welfare and Social Affairs are concerned with matters relating to relief, health, sanitation, etc. The functions of these overlap somewhat with those of the police and the Naha Health Center. One day each month a nurse from the Health Center is at the township office giving shots to children. Once a month there is a sanitation inspection of all the villages within the 'son'; the emphasis shifts each month---thus, one month it may be for mosquito control and the next it may be extermination of flies. Relief measures are also handled from these departments.

632 178 [666] A 'son' assemoly ('senkai' or 'songikai') functions as the legislative branch of 'son' government; it is empowered to enact local ordinances, approve the mayor's selection of employees for the village office, and make local tax levies. In Kanegusuku-son each of the eight villages selects two representatives ('sonkaigiin') for the assembly, and the term of office is four years. Before the end of the war this body was an appointive one selected by the mayors of the villages ('kuchō'); in turn the assembly appointed the township mayor. The bulk of the population had no voice in local government; today, however, both the mayor and the assembly stand for election. In all elections for municipal and central government offices universal suffrage now obtains; all those twenty and above are entitled to vote.

632 622 The meetings of the 'son' assembly are too infrequent to provide effective representation at all times for the people. Regular contact between the people and the township office is maintained by frequent meetings of all the village mayors ('kuchō') with the township mayor ('sonchō'). This group, known as 'kuchokai' (village mayors' assembly), meets three times each month generally on the fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth, though in times of emergency or pressing business it may meet oftener. Problems of general concern to the villages are discussed. These meetings enable the township mayor to keep in touch with the problems of the villages and what the people are thinking; they also provide the opportunity to inform and instruct the village mayors regarding directives or projects to be carried out in the villages.

632 651 One of the chief functions of the township government is to collect taxes for the central government and for its own needs. The following township taxes ('senzei', or in legal terminology, 'chihōzei') are those levied by Kanegusuku-son:

senmin-zei	Villagers' Tax. This is a head tax on all persons who are able to work between the ages of 17 and 60 excluding students, blind, sick, and crippled persons.
tochi-zei	Land Tax. For details see chapter on Land Tenure.
fudōsan shutoku-zei	Real Estate Acquisition Tax.
kaoku-zei	House or Building Tax.

632

15th - Industrial Inspection of Southern Okinawa.
16th - Sunday.
17th - Extermination of all noxious insects.
18th - 'Kuchōkai'. Meeting of all village mayors at 2 p.m.
19th -
20th - Inspection of fields.
Study for preparation of new 'koseki' at Shuri City Office, 10 p.m.
Meeting of chiefs of all Public Welfare Departments at Okinawa Kaikan, Naha.
21st - Training class for office workers of municipalities. The following must attend: Assistant Mayor, Chief of General Affairs Department, Treasurer, Chief Accountant, and Election Secretary.
Meeting of chiefs of all Public Welfare Departments, Naha.
22nd - Meeting of chiefs of all Public Welfare Departments, Naha.
23rd - Sunday. Farewell and welcome party for new and old mayors of the municipalities at Restaurant Hanasaki, Naha, 6 p.m.
24th - Dispensary. Shots for children.
25th - 'Kuchōkai'. Meeting of all village mayors at 2 p.m.
26th -
27th -
28th -
29th -
30th - Sunday
31st -

622 Village ('ku') Government Political Organization A 'kuchō' (mayor of 'ku') presides over the administration of the village and functions as an intermediary between the villagers and the township office. In the latter capacity he carries the problems, questions, and complaints of the people to the township office ('senyakuba'); he also brings to the village directives and projects requested by that office and supervises their execution. In Kanegusuku-ku a 'kuchō' is elected for a term of one year and is not eligible for reelection; in order to be eligible [465] for the office he must be over 27 years of age and a household head. He receives a monthly salary of ¥1100 ($9.17) which is paid by the township, not the village. The office exacts heavy demands on the individual's time; consequently the position is accepted with a sense of responsibility or obligation, as a duty to be performed, rather than for any prestige or other benefits which m might accrue. A 'kuchō' must make frequent trips to the township office, at least several a week; in addition three times each month he attends meetings of all the village mayors in his township. Emergencies in the village always demand his time. For example, when a death occurred in the village, he walked to the township office and notified the officials there, next notified the 'son' policeman, and then he walked to another village to secure a funeral palanquin; lastly he returned to his village and participated in the funeral ceremonies. His home is usually open at all times to villagers who seek information or wish to discuss a problem. Often he is asked to attend to a minor matter at the township office in their behalf; frequently these are matters of a sort which might as easily be handled by the individual concerned.

One of his major responsibilities to the township office is tax collection within the village; yet, his actual powers are slight, as nearly all of his official acts are first sanctioned by the villagers or the township office. It seemed to the author that the chief role of the 'kuchō' was as an intermediary between the people and the township office or as an agent for the latter, rather than as an administrator. It would seem that the payment of his salary by the township instead of by the village is symbolic of his actual role. 622 [651] [632]

Assisting the 'kuchō' are several officers the first of which is the assistant mayor ('fuku-kuchō') who is elected at the same time as the mayor and serves for one year. He is paid ¥480 ($4.00) per month, and like the mayor he must be over 27 and a household head. In the absence of the mayor he functions in his place, and on all other occasions he assists him in his work. A village clerk ('shōki') is also elected at the same time as the 'kuchō', and serves for a term of one year; he is paid a salary of ¥700 ($5.83) each month. The main qualifications for this position are that one have a fair amount of education and a good mastery of characters for writing. The job holds little appeal since it demands much of the individual's time and affords little in the way of prestige or pay. In Kanegusuku-ku in December of 1953 three elections were held in an effort to fill this position before someone finally and quite reluctantly accepted it. 624 [465] [465]

An advisory body of four councillors ('hyōgiin') assists the mayor in his administration; they represent each of the four neighborhoods or districts of the village. They are elected at the same time as the mayor, serve for one year, and receive a salary of ¥20 (17¢) per meeting. According to the villagers this body has replaced the earlier yuushi which was an unelected advisory council made up of former village officials, the village equivalent of elder statesmen. The 'kuchō' never undertakes an independent course of action; he first consults the'hyōgiin' and obtains their approval and suggestions before initiating action. 623 [465]

Each village of Kanegusuku-son elects two men to represent it in the township ('son') assembly ('sonkai'); they are elected for a term of four years. Older, mature men who have held several official positions are always selected. They also play a part in village administration and are considered village officials. At all meetings they sit with the officials, and their opinion is much valued. 624 632

All matters of real importance are submitted to the household heads who form the real body politic within the village. The electorate for the village consists exclusively of household heads; to vote in a village election one must be a household head or one appointed by him to vote in his place, but in township and national elections universal suffrage obtains. At one village election which the author witnessed in December of 1953 balloting began as soon as the meeting was called to order without any preliminary speeches or nominations. It was later stated that the election and likely candidates had been informally discussed among the village leaders and household heads so that there was no need for preliminaries. The same situation seemed to prevail when meetings were held to discuss matters of general concern; the apparent unanimity of opinion and agreement indicated that informal concordance had been reached well in advance of formal discussion and decision. 621 592 666